

Russia-United States Joint Statement on Privileges and Immunities

June 4, 2000

In connection with the signature of the Memorandum of Agreement Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on the Establishment of a Joint Center for the Exchange of Data From Early Warning Systems and Notifications of Missile Launches, the Parties agree that U.S. citizens working at the JDEC that are placed on the list of administrative and technical personnel of the Embassy of the United States of America in the Russian Federation shall be accorded the corresponding privileges and immunities.

NOTE: The joint statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary in conjunction with the joint statement formally entitled, "Memorandum of Agreement Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on the Establishment of a Joint Center for the Exchange of Data From Early Warning Systems and Notifications of Missile Launches." An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

The President's News Conference With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in Moscow

June 4, 2000

President Putin. Good day, ladies and gentlemen. I will allow myself to begin summing up our 2 days of work with our guests and partners, with the President of the United States, Mr. Bill Clinton, and members of his team. For 2 days now, we worked very intensively. And I have to say right off the bat that both in terms of the spirit and the quality of our talks, as well as the results, the Russian side cannot but express its satisfaction.

We discussed issues of interest in our opinion not only to the United States and the Russian Federation but to the other countries, as well, on global matters—all of mankind's interest really lies here. We discussed in great detail everything that had been done in this very important—issues of interest to both of our sides, and that which have been

in the last several years. We agree that we're going to be acting in this direction jointly in the future.

We discussed the issues of new global threats, threats such as terrorism, narcotics, crime. We talked about issues which, to our mind, have a certain solution; in the estimation of our American colleagues, maybe have a different kind of a solution. We exchanged ideas and opinions on issues to which we had different solutions in the past. These talks were very candid, very open, and very topical.

As you know, with my colleague, with the President of the United States, I signed several documents, including statements on security. And many things are determined and defined there, and much is said in these documents. The result I think can be summed up by saying that we not only confirmed the high level of our relations, but we also expressed the trend of the development of our relations between our two countries for the near future.

I wanted to stress here, ladies and gentlemen, the following, that over the last period of time, say a year or even more, the relations between our two countries have been of a varied kind. At one time, we had relations increasing and improving, then they would be falling. But that high level, which was reached over the last 8 years by the efforts of the Russian leadership and of the administration of President Clinton, allowed us to always find a way out of these crises with honor, not only to reestablish good relations but also to solve problems where we had disagreements. And we really cherish this. I am pleased to note here that in these very tough questions, we observed not only a desire to speak but also to find joint and mutually beneficial solutions.

We discussed also topics that had to do with bilateral economic interests. Here I wanted to say that the Russian Federation, in the face of your humble servant and the Chairman of the Government, the Prime Minister, Mr. Kasyanov, the leading ministers of the Government who participated and took part in these talks and negotiations not only informed and described to our American guests what's happening economically in Russia today but also discussed with

our partners joint actions, joint activities, both of a bilateral nature as well as within the framework of international financial institutions.

I wanted to stress here as well that the Russian Federation aims not only to go through its transformation, about which many people have so much spoken, but very decisively to do so in a practical way. I mean moving ahead on the tax code and moving ahead on production sharing. Here we have some issues which we have not yet been able to resolve between us and the state Duma, but I think these are rather technical issues. I think, together with the Deputies in the state Duma, we're going to be trying to find solutions and finally get this legislation.

We spoke about the upcoming international events, the Okinawa summit, the Millennium summit in the United Nations in New York, the Brunei meeting. In this way, Mr. Clinton and myself, we have reached an accord on further joint progress along a whole series of issues, which not only we discussed today and yesterday and which we will still have an opportunity to discuss some more tomorrow, to move ahead on these issues at the events that I have listed.

On behalf of the leadership of the Russian Federation, I want to thank the American delegation not only for accepting our invitation and coming to Russia but for a very constructive and businesslike discussion in an attempt to find solutions.

Thank you so much for your attention.

President Clinton. I would like to first thank President Putin and the Russian delegation for making us feel welcome and for these talks.

I have come to Moscow at an important time. Russia, after all, has a new President, new government, new Duma. Its economy is showing encouraging signs of growth. This gives Russia a pivotal opportunity to build on the strong record of engagement between our two countries. It is also an opportunity for the United States.

I welcome President Putin's interest in building a Russia that enjoys the enduring strength of a stable democracy. President Yeltsin led Russia to freedom. Under President Putin, Russia has the chance to build

prosperity and strength, while safeguarding that freedom and the rule of law.

We've had good discussions both last night and today on a range of common interests, including nonproliferation and arms control. We expressed our differences with clarity and candor. And I, for one, appreciate that. The importance of this relationship to ourselves and the world demands that we take every opportunity we can to find common ground and that, where we cannot find it, we express our differences with clarity and candor.

I congratulated President Putin on the key role he played in the Duma's ratification of START II and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. The United States ratified START II first, and I hope we will now follow Russia in ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. I also look forward to the ratification of the START II protocols by our Senate so that we can get about the business of further reducing the number of nuclear missiles that we have.

I am very pleased today we agreed on two other major steps to reduce the nuclear danger. We reached an important agreement each to destroy 34 tons of military-grade plutonium, enough to make thousands of warheads. This raw weapon material that will now never fall into the wrong hands.

We also agreed to establish a joint data exchange center in Moscow to share early warning information on missile and space launches. This is terribly important. It is the first permanent U.S.-Russia military operation ever.

In this new center, Russian and American military officials will be working side by side, 24 hours a day, to monitor missile warning information. It is a milestone in enhancing strategic stability, and I welcome it.

The President and I also discussed our common commitment to prevent the proliferation of missile technology and our determination to exert firm control over exports of sensitive technology and strictly enforce export control laws and regulations.

We discussed our common interest in commercial space cooperation, including the successful joint venture that launches commercial satellites. We agreed that our teams

would soon meet to discuss future cooperation in the commercial space area, with the aim of moving toward eliminating existing constraints on commercial space launches.

We also had a thorough discussion of our work on the START III treaty and the issue of national missile defense. We have agreed to a statement of principles, which I urge you to read carefully. It makes clear that there is an emerging ballistic missile threat that must be addressed, though we have not yet agreed on how best to do so.

We have acknowledged that the ABM Treaty foresees the possibility of changes in the strategic environment that might require it to be updated. We have reaffirmed our commitment to pursue further reduction in offensive arms in parallel with our discussions on defense systems, underscoring the importance of the doctrines of strategic stability and mutual deterrence as the foundation for this work.

We've asked our experts to keep working to narrow the differences and to develop a series of cooperative measures to address the missile threat. And we have agreed that we will continue to discuss it in our next meeting.

We spent a large share of our time discussing economics. I'm encouraged by the economic plan President Putin has outlined and by the current recovery. I look forward to Russia's continuing to implement proposed reforms that will actually make the recovery last, reforms such as tax reform, anti-money-laundering legislation, strong property rights protections.

I look forward to Russia's successful negotiations with the IMF. This is a good economic team with a very good opportunity to increase investment in Russia, both the return of money that Russians have placed outside the country and new investments from other countries.

Later this month, our former Ambassador to Moscow, Bob Strauss, will come to Russia with a delegation of investors, including some of America's best-known chief executive officers, to discuss opportunities in Russia and the steps Russia is taking to improve its investment climate. I think this will be only the beginning of a very successful effort at

economic reform, if the intentions that President Putin outlined become reality.

The President and I also discussed another area where we disagree, Chechnya. I have restated the opposition that I have to a policy which is well-known. Essentially, I believe a policy that causes so many civilian casualties without a political solution ultimately cannot succeed. I also urged President Putin to move forward with transparent and impartial investigations of the stories of human rights violations and to authorize a speedy return of the OSCE to the region.

Finally, I stressed to President Putin the importance the United States places on protecting religious freedom and the rights of an independent media. I strongly agree with what President Putin himself has said, that Russia has no future if it suppresses civic freedoms and the press.

We agreed to advance our technical cooperation on climate change. We believe it's essential to complete work on the Kyoto Protocol, including market mechanisms, to protect the environment, promote clean energy, and reduce costs. I think Russia has a great economic opportunity here as well as a great environmental one.

And on these issues, the President and I are asking the U.S.-Russia binational commission, under the leadership of Vice President Gore and Prime Minister Kasyanov, to carry forward the work.

I was encouraged by our discussion, pleased with our agreements, pleased with the candor and clarity of our disagreements. I am eager for more progress. I'm also looking forward to the chance to talk to the Russian people tonight in a radio talk show, and tomorrow, as I have the opportunity to speak to the Duma and the Federation Council.

Again Mr. President, I thank you for this and especially for these two agreements, and I look forward to our continued work together.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. The question to the President of Russia. What is the priority you give to Russian-American relations in the world, and a world that, as we see, is changing and forming in a different way?

Thank you.

President Putin. The history of relations of the former Soviet Union and the United States of America, and now Russian Federation and the United States—its history, as I've said, has many dramatic as well as many positive elements. We were allies. There was a period of time when we suffered through confrontation between our two sides. One would hope that the very worst in our relations is far, far behind us.

For today, the United States is one of our main partners. And as far as Russia is concerned, it will never make the choice regarding the United States in order to start once again confrontation. Never. We are for co-operation. We are for coming to agreement on problems that might arise.

And naturally, problems like this exist and have existed and probably will exist. That is not important. What's important is that the approach to finding a solution is only one—it's unique—it cannot be aimed at destroying everything positive that has been achieved in the recent past but also looking into the future. And this kind of chance and this intention among the leadership of Russia, as well as I understand it, among the leadership of the United States, the President of the United States, we are going to follow these principles, these kinds of tendencies.

Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty

Q. Mr. President, do you see the chance that the United States would exercise its option to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty if it is not possible to negotiate changes to permit a national missile defense? And was this possibility raised in your discussions with President Putin?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I have not made a decision on the national missile defense stage one. It is premature. The statement of principles that we have agreed to I thought reflected an attempt to bring our positions closer together. I do not believe the decision before me is a threat to strategic stability and mutual deterrence. The Russian side disagrees. But we had a lot of agreement here.

And again, let me say, I urge you all to read that. I do not want the United States to withdraw from the ABM regime because, I think, it has contributed to a more stable,

more peaceful world. It has already been amended once, and its framers understood that circumstances might change and threats might arise which were outside the context of U.S.-now Russian relations. We acknowledge that there is a threat. It needs to be met, and we're trying to bridge our differences. And I think that's where we ought to leave it.

START Treaties

Q. President Clinton, Mr. President, what do you feel about Russia's continuation of reducing within START III the number of warheads down to 1,500 warheads?

Thank you.

President Clinton. I missed the translation. Would you give it to me again?

Q. What would be the attitude of the United States, Mr. President, on the Russian position of coming down to 1,500 warheads within START III?

President Clinton. Well, we had previously agreed to a range of 2,000 to 2,500 on START III. If we were to come down below that, it would require us to change our strategic plan. And we believe it would be much better if we were going to do that, if we could also know that we were defending ourselves against a new threat, which we believe is real. So we will continue to discuss all these things.

Let me say, I am certain—I am eager to get down to the START II levels, and I am eager to go below the START II levels, but I also want to try to solve the new threat, as well. And I will do whatever I can to achieve both objectives.

Clinton/Putin Relationship

Q. This is for both Presidents. Now that you have met together as Presidents, how would you describe each other's personalities and leadership qualities? And how do you see them affecting relations between the two countries? And in particular, President Clinton, are you any more or less assured about the future of democracy in Russia following your meetings today?

President Clinton. You want to go first?

President Putin. As you know, this is not our first meeting, between myself and President Clinton. President Clinton, now for almost 8 years, heads one of the most powerful countries in the world. He's a very experienced politician. In my mind, we've established now not only good business ties but also personal relations. For me, President Clinton is a person who is a very comfortable and pleasant partner in negotiations.

I think that if everyone behaves the way President Clinton has behaved, not trying to find dead ends and problems but to seek ways of moving ahead, I think, between us in the future our relations really will be successful. Take a look at the ABM Treaty. There are a lot of problems there. We've written down in our statement, about which Mr. Clinton just spoke, a basis, a principle of basis for maintaining the ABM Treaty as a major key point in the whole strategic balance and for maintaining security.

Now, the starting point for the possibility of seeing new threats arrive, we have a commonality. We're against having a cure which is worse than the disease. We understand that there are ways and a basis that we can build upon in order to solve even this issue, an issue which seems to be one of the most difficult to solve.

So I repeat, we know that today, in the United States, there is a campaign ongoing. We're familiar with the programs of the two main candidates. And if these programs are implemented, and there it says, for instance, the necessity to positively improve relations between Russia and the United States, the time that Mr. Clinton is going to pass on to the next President, no matter who gets to be President, we're willing to go forward on either one of these approaches.

Thank you.

President Clinton. Well, let me say first, I think President Putin has an enormous opportunity and a great challenge. If you want to know what my personal assessment is, I think he is fully capable of building a prosperous, strong Russia, while preserving freedom and pluralism and the rule of law. It's a big challenge. I think he is fully capable of doing it.

And I want to use the time I have remaining as President not only to further the inter-

ests of the United States in meeting our national security threat but also to further our interest in having a good, stable relationship with a Russia that is strong and prosperous and free, respecting pluralism and the rule of law. That's what I'm trying to do. I think he is fully capable of achieving that. And I'm encouraged by the first 2 days of our really serious work.

NOTE: The President's 191st news conference began at 6:55 p.m. in St. George's Hall in the Kremlin. In his remarks, he referred to former President Boris Yeltsin and current Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov of Russia. President Putin and some reporters spoke in Russian, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Interview With Aleksei Venediktov of Ekho Moskv Radio in Moscow

June 4, 2000

Mr. Venediktov. Good evening. Today we have a guest, the President of the United States of America. Good evening, Mr. President.

The President. Good evening.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Mr. Venediktov. Right off the bat, I'd like to say that today we've already had a press conference, which our listeners could see you, and so for that reason, my questions will not be political in nature. Mostly listeners will be asking their questions.

My first question is as follows, Mr. President. The latest public opinion poll in Russia by the Institute of—[inaudible]—had found that 11 percent of Russians see an enemy in the United States. Another 11 percent of Russians do not know how to answer this question. And 78 percent of Russians believe that Russia is more of a friend, rather than an enemy. I would ask you, since just the ordinary people say this, as to the other 22 percent who feel that Russia is either an enemy or do not know how to answer the question, what would you be able to say directly to those people who are now listening to you and watching you?

The President. Well, first I would say the 78 percent are right. And I would say that the United States has tried to be a friend